United Nations S/PV.6233 (Resumption 1)

Security Council

Sixty-fourth year

Provisional

6233rd meeting

Tuesday, 8 December 2009, 3.15 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Yoda/Mr. Kafando	(Burkina Faso)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Lutterotti
	China	Mr. Du Xiaocong
	Costa Rica	Mr. Artiñano
	Croatia	Mr. Vilović
	France	Mr. Araud
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	Uganda	Mr. Ociti
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Quarrey
	United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis
	Viet Nam	Mr. Bui The Giang

Agenda

Peace and security in Africa

Drug trafficking as a threat to international security

Letter dated 30 November 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2009/615)

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09-63874 (E)

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The meeting resumed at 3.25 p.m.

The President (*spoke in French*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Bolivia, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Loayza Barea (Bolivia) took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in French*): I would like to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously.

I now give the floor to the representative of Morocco.

Mr. Loulichki (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to welcome you, Mr. President, and to express the Kingdom of Morocco's appreciation for your choice topic to highlight the presidency of Burkina Faso in December. The choice of this topic is neither meaningless nor accidental. It clearly illustrates the concern of many countries, especially African countries, regarding the magnitude that drug trafficking has attained and its consequences for the health of its victims and for development and political stability in affected States.

Drug trafficking has become one of the world's most pressing transnational threats. No country can consider itself safe from its harmful effects. It is a threat because of its scope, its cross-cutting nature and the people involved in it. The $400 billion per year that the drug trade represents is in and of itself very revealing in terms of the threat that it poses to our common security.

The situation in Africa, particularly in West Africa, is of concern because of the extent of this scourge. The figure of 50 to 60 tons of traffic per year, cited this morning by the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), reveals the gravity of this trade and the need to address it.

The situation is all the more threatening in that it affects a region that is fragile in terms of peace and stability and where a number of countries are emerging from many years of armed conflict. This is of concern on several fronts, and requires States and our universal Organization to act, as the threats posed by this phenomenon are twofold.

On the one hand, there is the risk that a number of countries will be destabilized in the region by an ill-intentioned use of the proceeds of trafficking to undermine the Governments in place, finance subversive actions or even carry out terrorist attacks. On the other hand, as international cooperation to fight narcotics trafficking has developed, there has been a parallel and increasing collusion among drug cartels, small arms traffickers and those who exploit clandestine migration routes. Such groups will stop at nothing, including terrorism and hostage-taking, to maintain their illegal source of income.

The major itineraries for the traffic in drugs, in particular cocaine, have evolved. Given the steady international demand for cocaine and the strengthening of measures to intercept the drug along traditional routes, traffickers have turned towards West Africa. The choice of this region is incredibly unfortunate, as our region has just painfully emerged from a decade of endemic violence.

As seen at the 2008 Praia summit of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), States of the region have demonstrated their commitment to curbing this traffic. However, their efforts are not enough in and of themselves. Financial, technical and training support will also be necessary to the success of their efforts.

Fighting drug trafficking in West Africa and its many implications for regional and international stability require a renewed commitment on the part of all Member States, given the indivisible nature of security, in order to assist States of the region to develop their capacity for cooperation against organized crime, whose connections to terrorist networks are now known to all.

My country welcomes the initiatives carried out by ECOWAS, with the support of the United Nations and the international community, to reverse the trend in

this harmful trafficking, as well as the first positive results of these efforts witnessed since last year. This initiative must be pursued and broadened to include other destination countries in the larger Sahara area, which stretches from West to East Africa.

Strengthening regional and subregional cooperation in combating drug trafficking in West Africa requires a multilateral effort in which the international community should invest in a resolute approach to curbing the phenomenon. In this respect, we must note that the critical areas for building West African capacity to combat this scourge include the provision of technical assistance by donors, the improvement of prevention and treatment of addiction, and the strengthening of cooperation in detection and interdiction. Given the density and international ramifications of active local narcotics trafficking networks, States of the region must cooperate with INTERPOL.

Given its geographical position, its proximity to West Africa and the importance it attaches to stability in that sensitive region of our continent, the Kingdom of Morocco follows with particular attention the situation in the vast Sahelo-Saharan region, in particular the alarming developments in the trafficking of arms, narcotics and persons and the recent terrorist acts directed against the people — and sometimes the States — of the region.

This situation requires the international community to take a three-pronged approach. First, the ongoing conflicts and disputes in the region must be resolved; secondly, countries emerging from conflict must be bolstered and supported in their political and economic reconstruction; and thirdly, bilateral, regional and international cooperation to eliminate trafficking must be strengthened.

Beyond such urgent measures, the true asset in combating these scourges remains socio-economic development and the establishment of economic governance and the rule of law. We hope that the response of the international community will be commensurate with the challenge and our shared responsibility.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Mali.

Mr. Daou (Mali) (*spoke in French*): First and foremost, I wish to extend to you, Mr. President, my delegation's congratulations on your initiative to hold this open Security Council debate on a phenomenon that is one of the priorities on the international agenda. In convening this special meeting devoted to the problem of drug trafficking as a threat to international security, your country, Burkina Faso, has given us the opportunity to hold a constructive debate on a subject that is of major concern to the international community, in particular West Africa and the Sahelo-Saharan belt. These regions have regrettably become a hub for international drug trafficking.

The scope of the phenomenon of drug trafficking and its diversification thanks to globalization and technological progress are of concern to us all. Indeed, drug trafficking is now a true scourge and a real threat to the security and stability of a good number of countries. Illicit narcotics trafficking is today at the forefront of organized transnational crime, and abusive drug use leads many young people into physical and mental decay. Official reports and studies on the issue point to the fact that drug trafficking has grown significantly in recent years, thereby becoming a potential source of instability and destabilization.

In Mali we have made the fight against drugs and psychotropic products a first-line priority, given their negative impact on health and negative consequences in the socio-economic and security sectors. The Government of Mali has taken a series of steps aimed at combating this phenomenon by, in particular, establishing an anti-drug inter-ministerial coordination committee. The committee is charged with participating in the development of a national anti-drug policy, working to coordinate the efforts of various State services in the area of narcotics and psychotropic substances, coordinating educational efforts and offering advice about actions and measures planned by the Government.

The Government of Mali fully believes that no country today is immune from drug trafficking. Only effective and coordinated efforts, both within States and at the international level, will make it possible to stamp out this scourge.

The recent incident involving the Boeing plane in Tarkint has served to remind us of the urgency of better coordinating and harmonizing the efforts of our Governments to ensure an integrated and comprehensive approach to the problems and challenges facing the countries of the Sahelo-Saharan

region. It also served to underscore the need to further strengthen national and regional capacities. Upon the discovery, on 2 November, of the wreck of that plane in a deserted and uninhabited area of northern Mali, the Government of Mali quickly opened an investigation that included INTERPOL, the intelligence services of friendly countries and the relevant bodies of the United Nations system. The investigation is continuing, in particular with regard to tracing the origin of the aircraft and its route, cargo and equipment and the reason for the trip.

Press reports and information provided by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime with regard to the nature and size of the cargo will in no way influence the course of the investigation. We continue to believe that sensational statements and hasty conclusions will not be useful in exposing the truth. Having said that, I will say that for my country and its Government, whose position on this matter is not to be doubted, this is in no way about adopting a head-in-the-sand approach.

We have known for a long time that the Sahelo-Saharan strip, which Mali shares with many countries, has become an area where all sorts of trafficking takes place — trafficking in drugs, cigarettes, light weapons and human beings. In addition, the Government of Mali expresses its great concern at the extent of such trafficking, which has now joined terrorism and international organized crime to pose not just a serious threat to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the countries of the region, but also a major impediment to their development.

We are aware of the transnational nature of those threats, as well as of the crucial need for improved subregional cooperation to overcome them. That is why His Excellency Mr. Amadou Toumani Touré, President of the Republic of Mali, has worked tirelessly for more than two years to hold a regional conference in Bamako on the issues of peace, security and development in the Sahelo-Saharan region.

The conference will provide a useful opportunity for the countries of the region to reaffirm their joint determination to make the region they share a zone of peace and security and a centre of stability, growth and development. The preparatory meeting at the level of ministers for foreign affairs held in Bamako in November 2008 has already laid the groundwork. We hope that, very soon, the heads of State of the countries concerned will meet to consider and adopt the conference's conclusions.

We firmly believe that there is necessarily a link between all the scourges to which I have referred and that no single country can effectively address them all. The multiple challenges we face today require a collective and coherent response at the global level.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate here Mali's commitment to working with all countries and bodies involved in combating drug trafficking. We urge the international community and the United Nations to further support the initiatives and efforts made by our countries in our common fight to halt the drug trafficking phenomenon and create a better world.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Italy.

Mr. Ragaglini (Italy): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's open debate on drug trafficking as a threat to international security. Following last July's debates on peace consolidation in West Africa (see S/PV.6157 and S/PV.6160), your initiative confirms the Security Council's attention to the growing threat posed by drug trafficking and organized crime to international peace and security. I also wish to express my sincere appreciation to the Secretary-General and the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for their comprehensive and accurate reports.

Italy would like to endorse the statement delivered by the representative of Sweden in its capacity in the presidency of the European Union.

Never before has individual, national and international security been so clearly interconnected. Today transnational crime, particularly the drug trade, is relevant to the definition of a "world risk society". For the international community to tackle it, a new approach is needed, one that has two main characteristics: the ability to deal effectively with non-State actors, and improvements in international cooperation and information-sharing.

Security today is a multidisciplinary challenge. It requires global analysis, global commitment and a global response. While stopping drug traffickers is a decisive element, it should not be the driver of our policies. Development is a crucial step towards achieving security.

The 2009 Italian presidency of the Group of Eight (G-8) attached special significance to those new destabilizing factors and transnational threats. Last May, an international conference was held in Rome that was co-chaired by the Italian Interior and Foreign Affairs Ministers and attended by specialized international agencies, regional organizations and prominent experts. At the conference, participants defined the conceptual framework for the political declaration adopted in July by the G-8 leaders at L'Aquila.

The harmful leverage of drug trafficking and organized crime is multiplied in vulnerable regions, where they destabilize States from within and can create asymmetrical shocks at the international level. Your emphasis on the African situation, Mr. President, is thus particularly appropriate.

West Africa is a test case for the international community. The West African States' ability to achieve the Millennium Development Goals depends, to a large extent, on strategic and effective coordination between international cooperation and national policies. The involvement of the United Nations Office for West Africa as a bridge between the Organization and regional efforts, along with the personal commitment of Ambassador Djinnit, represent an important step in that direction. I commend UNODC for its commitment and achievements in every aspect of our common action.

Some years ago, UNODC gave us an early warning about West Africa's risk of becoming a platform for drug trafficking and organized crime. Its reports on drug trafficking there represented the most detailed, in-depth analysis available at the international level.

UNODC encourages international cooperation through the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the West Africa Coast Initiative, which draw on the combined forces of the Department of Political Affairs, Department of Peacekeeping Operations and INTERPOL. Just last week, a donor conference in Vienna aimed at assisting ECOWAS attracted major support.

Italy has contributed €1.3 million to those initiatives and provided a coast guard unit and one aircraft for border control in Senegal in the framework of the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union, or FRONTEX, programme. Starting next January, UNODC will work in collaboration with two teams of Italian Guardia di Finanza experts to develop, execute and implement a capacity-building project for the law enforcement agencies of Guinea Bissau, Mali, Sierra Leone and Senegal to fight against drug trafficking and transnational organized crime. In response to the requests of national beneficiaries and the findings of country-based preliminary assessment missions, the Italian specialized trainers will develop and run tailored-made training programmes for each of those four countries.

Italy remains committed to supporting Afghanistan's efforts to reduce the illegal cultivation and production of narcotic substances. The outreach session of the G8 Ministerial Meeting, held in Trieste on 26-27 June, highlighted the need for joint initiatives in border management, the harmonization of judiciary systems, the strengthening of intelligence networks, the exchange of information, the eradication of illicit drug crops and alternative development.

Italy supports the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC) and welcomes its cooperation with the Joint Planning Cell for the countries of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan and the Gulf Centre for Criminal Intelligence.

Italy contributed $500,000 to CARICC and €400,000 to UNODC regional programme on Afghanistan and neighbouring countries to enhance operational capacities in border management and to counter drug trafficking, and has contributed €1.5 million to the Afghan Counter-Narcotics Trust Fund.

Criminal entrepreneurs are exploiting regional vulnerabilities, taking advantage of their unique combination of risk and rewards under current conditions. Our response must change that arithmetic. Enabling information-sharing and police and judicial cooperation among all countries affected by this traffic would give a fundamental added value to our operational capacities.

In that regard, the United Nations conventions against crime and corruption are our strongest weapons. 2010 will mark the 10th anniversary of the Palermo Convention and its additional protocols. Today, more than ever, we need a firm commitment from the entire United Nations membership to that and other instruments. The General Assembly's omnibus resolution on the United Nations Crime Prevention and

Criminal Justice Programme, proposed by Italy and approved in November by the Third Committee with the co-sponsorship of 117 Member States, clearly affirms those goals.

That resolution requests the Secretary-General to convene a special high-level meeting of the General Assembly on transnational organized crime in the second quarter of 2010. The purpose of the meeting would be to foster universal adherence to the Palermo Convention and strengthen international cooperation. It should also create political momentum for next year's Conference of States Parties and its high-level segment. We call upon all Member States to be represented at the highest level possible at those events, so as to confirm our common political will and shared responsibility in tackling drug trafficking and related forms of organized crime.

Italy welcomes the presidential statement that was adopted by the Security Council today and will continue to be an active partner in international and regional efforts to tackle the convergent threats to international security of organized crime and drug trafficking.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, Mr. Tete António.

Mr. António (*spoke in French*): I would like to begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for convening this debate and by commending the initiative of the Burkina Faso delegation, which has always defended the most vital interests of Africa during its terms on the Security Council. Through the action of the delegation of Burkina Faso, African Union (AU) decisions have been assured resonance in the Council.

We would also like to thank other African members of the Council, Libya and Uganda, for all the efforts they have made to achieve the same resonance of African Union decisions in the Council.

We reiterate our thanks to the Council, which has always dealt with African issues. A case in point would be today's meeting on the Côte d'Ivoire.

We also commend Mr. Antonio Maria Costa for his very instructive briefing, which painted a very clear picture of Africa. There is no need to go back over that information.

The production and abuse of drugs in many African countries, which are used as a transit point for their trafficking and stockpiling, is a great challenge for Africa. Youth is exposed to serious risks as the result of trafficking and drug abuse, as well as crimes associated with that problem such as money-laundering and human trafficking.

Excessive violence and crimes against humanity in conflict situations are, to a large extent, exacerbated by drug abuse. Given that situation, Africa is fighting incessantly to play its role in combating that scourge. In fact, the very first ministerial conference of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) on the fight against drugs in Africa, held in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, had as its primary objective the review and updating of the action plan that had been adopted during the thirty-second Summit of OAU Heads of State and Government in Yaounde, Cameroon, in July 1996.

The conference adopted a new 2002-2006 OAU action plan to combat drugs. Since that time, the African Union has followed up on its efforts and the third regular session of the Conference of Ministers of the African Union on fighting drugs and preventing crime was held in Addis Abbas, Ethiopia, in December 2007 on the topic of the renewed commitment in Africa to combating addiction and drug trafficking and to preventing crime.

The major result of that session was the revised action plan of the African Union on trafficking and drug abuse and crime prevention, as well as its follow-up mechanism, to be implemented in partnership by the interested parties at all levels. That plan is fully integrated as well in the strategic African Union plan for 2009-2012. Priority areas and recommendations listed and included in the plan clearly place the responsibility for its implementation on the AU Commission, member States, regional economic communities, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and civil society.

The African plan also includes a multi-disciplinary approach, one that is coordinated and balanced so as to resolve the problems of drug abuse and trafficking, which must be dealt with in the context of African development beyond the narrow framework of simply curbing it.

In doing our utmost to find a solution to addiction, drug trafficking and related phenomenon,

the African Union is also emphasizing the principle of integration, putting the fight against drugs into all aspects of planning and the implementation of development, which includes the fight against poverty, the empowerment of women, alternative development strategies and HIV/AIDS programmes.

In the light of this fact, a new partnership was established with the competent organizations, with the participation of the Organization of American States, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom and the German agency German Technical Cooperation, which has launched cooperation by sharing experiences and best practices in the framework of alternative development programmes to eradicate coca and opium and the illegal cultivation of cannabis.

The African Union also emphasizes the importance of strengthening institutions, information on policymaking, research, the establishment of networks, national capacity-building, oversight and implementation of the law, regional legislative control measures and international cooperation. We are pleased to note, as a number of speakers have emphasized today, that African countries are undertaking a variety of legislative measures or capacity-building to implement legislation on the ground in order to honour Africa's commitment to combating this phenomenon. We call on the Security Council and the international community to support these efforts. We therefore welcome the presidential statement that was adopted today (S/PRST/2009/32).

A number of delegations referred to the problem of regional partnership. We think that such partnerships are a solution that we should build upon.

As with climate change, we assert that Africa is once again the victim of a situation — in this case, drug trafficking — for which it is not responsible. In fact, as many have noted, the drugs are produced elsewhere. They come through Africa and are for the most part consumed elsewhere.

There is one mechanism that we believe we may be able to continue to develop. The African Union, for example, in the framework of its cooperation with South America, has made the issue of fighting drugs one of its priorities. We also have the South Atlantic Peace and Cooperation Zone. It is clear that the Luanda Plan of Action sets out important measures that could be implemented to facilitate cooperation with South America, and in particular those countries of the continent where the drugs come from.

We also say to our European friends, with whom we have very close cooperation and ongoing dialogue, that drugs are consumed in their countries, so we all need to join in partnership to address this problem, which is of concern not only to Africa, but the entire world.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the Commissioner for Gender and Human Development of the Economic Community of West African States, Ms. Adrienne Yandé Diop.

Ms. Diop: First of all, I would like to congratulate the delegation of Burkina Faso on having drafted the presidential statement on drug trafficking as a threat to international security (S/PRST/2009/32) and for including this topic on the agenda of the Security Council. Burkina Faso has thus shown once again its commitment to regional issues and to resolving this very important problem.

On behalf of the Commission of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), I have the honour to deliver the following statement on the situation of drug trafficking and organized crime in West Africa and the ECOWAS Commission's response to this scourge.

Drug trafficking has become a menace to West African peace, security and development. Our region is increasingly used as a transit route in the trafficking of cocaine towards growing European markets and demand. Fourteen per cent of Europe's cocaine transited through West Africa in 2008 — some 40 tons valued at billions of United States dollars. Since 2005, 90 per cent of the 1,400 couriers arrested carrying drugs on commercial flights to Europe have hailed from West African countries. According to United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) sources, cocaine couriers have been detected at embarkation from 11 of the 15 ECOWAS member States, namely, Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo. Since 2005, cocaine seizures from West Africa to Europe have more than doubled.

Why has West Africa become a transit route for trafficking? There are many reasons. First, there has been increased surveillance on traditional trafficking routes. Secondly, there is West Africa's proximity to

Latin America. Thirdly, West African crime groups are active and persistent, as well as flexible in their operations. Fourthly, weak States naturally have great difficulty in controlling their territory and the porous borders and permissive working environment if West Africa. Finally, there is, of course, the high rate of youth unemployment in our subregion.

The effects of drug trafficking on ECOWAS countries are devastating and dramatic. To name just a few, we have seen increased security problems, crime, violence and conflict. Drug trafficking has had a negative impact on governance, including corruption, the undermining of the rule of law and political instability. Drug trafficking has had a negative impact on the economy, with an unexplained high influx of money. We have witnessed the rising use of cocaine, which creates problems of public health, including HIV/AIDS, and social problems.

In recent years, this phenomenon has worsened. First, we have recently started to see local laboratories transforming cocaine into amphetamines on the spot. Secondly, it is a known fact that a country that traffics is a country that consumes, and a region that traffics is a region that consumes. Our region is becoming a consuming region, and our youth is the most affected. Thirdly, drug trafficking has a correlation to money-laundering, arms and human trafficking. These are three problems that ECOWAS is presently addressing.

Although policies and institutions to address the drug problem are in place in individual ECOWAS member States, they are not enough, given the nature of the drug problem. It must also be stressed that trafficking in drugs and other related crime transcends national boundaries. Drug trafficking, in particular, usually involves three or more countries — the producing country, the transit country and the consuming country. It has been said here over and over again that no country and no region can do it alone. It has therefore become a regional and international issue, and institutions have to come together to combat such a menace in a holistic manner.

The narcotics problem is a national security and foreign policy issue of significant proportions. The drug cartels are so large and powerful that they have undermined some Governments. We have learned just recently that, a few weeks ago, a Boeing 707 aircraft violated a West African country's airspace. The aircraft was suspected to be full of cocaine.

Money from the drug trade will continue to undermine efforts at good governance in the region, and the people who are addicted to the drugs will continue to constitute security and health concerns for their communities.

I may be painting a picture that looks grim and hopeless. Yes, the picture is grim, but we are not hopeless. We are glad that, based on the recommendation of a ministerial conference held in Praia, Cape Verde, the ECOWAS heads of State and Government rose to the occasion in 2008 by adopting the Political Declaration on the Prevention of Drug Abuse, Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime in West Africa and the Regional Response Action Plan, which identified cooperation in preventing and eradicating drug trafficking and abuse as a priority programme for the ECOWAS Commission.

Since the Praia conference, the ECOWAS Commission has taken a number of steps to fight organized crime and the drug trade at the regional level. With the support of UNODC, the ECOWAS Commission developed an operational plan and a monitoring and evaluation mechanism to translate the Regional Response Action Plan and Political Declaration into concrete, time-bound and costed activities.

The plan is articulated around five thematic areas: the mobilization of ECOWAS political leadership and the need for allocation of adequate national budgets by ECOWAS member States for preventing and combating illicit drug trafficking, related organized crime and drug abuse; enhancing the effectiveness of law and enforcement cooperation; developing and adopting legal frameworks for effective criminal justice administration; addressing drug abuse and associated health and security problems; and creating valid and reliable data to monitor the magnitude of the drug trafficking and abuse problems affecting the region on a sustainable basis.

The ECOWAS operational plan will also focus on programmes and projects aimed at harmonizing national legislation, undertaking research, conducting training programmes, providing treatment, rehabilitation and alternative livelihood activities to drug users, and exchanging information on known and potential traffickers and drug users, to mention a few.

The revision of legal frameworks seeks to address the following measures: the refusal of entry visas to or

expulsion from ECOWAS member States of suspected drug traffickers and manufacturers, the signing of extradition treaties covering drug cases on a bilateral basis among ECOWAS member States, and a study of the need for introducing in each ECOWAS member State laws pertaining to the confiscation of the properties and assets of those involved in the trafficking of drugs. The operational plan will also address the dearth of quality forensic services in the region through capacity-building, enhancing infrastructure, developing protocol and networking among experts and laboratories in the region.

The plan does not place the onus of addressing the drug problem on the region alone. Rather, it also seeks to incorporate a strong communication strategy aimed at drawing national and international attention to the threat and potential impact of drug trafficking in West Africa.

For the ECOWAS region, the operational plan is not merely focused on enhancing policing, interdiction and arrests, but also seeks to explore how we can exploit our diversity, values and social assets to address the drug problem. This is why the engagement of civil society organizations, the media and traditional institutions, as well as alternative development programmes addressing cannabis production, are priority areas in the operational plan.

However, the operational plan is just the beginning. There is much work ahead. That is why we look forward to the continued commitment and support of the United Nations and other partners in our common resolve to address a growing problem that transcends beyond boundaries. I am pleased to announce here that, just last week in Vienna, at a drug donor roundtable organized jointly by ECOWAS, UNODC and the Austrian Government, the European Commission pledged to support the implementation of the ECOWAS plan through its Regional Indicative Programme. I would like also like to express at this juncture our gratitude to all Member States and institutions that have supported the implementation of our operational plan.

Other regions that have faced similar challenges have recorded some degree of success. They have been tireless in their efforts, and if they could succeed, we in West Africa can also succeed. I would like to conclude my address by once again reiterating on behalf of the ECOWAS Commission my profound gratitude for this opportunity and for the interest expressed in the development of the West African region.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Nigeria.

Mr. Amieyeofori (Nigeria): The Nigerian delegation congratulates you, Mr. President, on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for this month and on initiating this important discussion on drug trafficking as a threat to international security, thereby capping two years of productive presence on the Security Council. We thank the Secretary-General for his invaluable views and continuing efforts to tackle the problem. We also thank Mr. Antonio Maria Costa for his comprehensive statement and tenacity in the fight against drug trafficking.

Drug trafficking remains a major challenge to global peace and security. No country is totally immune from its devastating effects and none can fight and win the anti-narcotics war alone, regardless of the size of the resources at its disposal. In Africa, illicit drug trafficking, cultivation, processing and abuse are persistently on the rise and creating barriers to the continent's development efforts. International drug cartels outside the region are exploiting the underresourced border enforcement capacities of some countries and turning them into transit routes for prohibited drugs.

West Africa is most affected by the reprehensible activities of these drug cartels. The subregion is fast becoming a major warehouse and transit hub for cocaine and other illicit drugs. The actions of these criminal syndicates constitute a major threat not only to the subregion's fledgling democratic structures, but also to governance in general. Indeed, they constitute serious impediments to subregional efforts to promote human prosperity, wealth creation, economic development, the rule of law and peacebuilding. Drug trafficking has led directly to increased violent crimes, small arms proliferation, human trafficking, corruption, money-laundering and political instability.

Against this background, the States members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have demonstrated appreciable political will and commitment to fighting the scourge. In December 2008, the ECOWAS Action Plan on illicit drugs was adopted in Abuja by the heads of State and Government of ECOWAS as a major legal framework to complement existing mechanisms. The West Africa

Coast Initiative to support the implementation of the Action Plan has also been launched in Vienna and in New York. The Initiative recognizes the importance of partnerships for leveraging resources and for building national and regional capacities in the areas of law enforcement, forensics, intelligence, border management, the fight against money-laundering and the strengthening of criminal justice systems. The Initiative requires international support and gradual expansion beyond the pilot countries.

At the national level, the Nigerian National Drug Enforcement Agency has adopted a dual approach — drug supply control and drug demand control — to prevent the country from being used as a source, transit and destination for narcotics. The Agency is strengthening its institutional capacity, prosecutorial capability and surveillance activities. Nigeria remains firmly committed to achieving the ultimate goal of ridding the country and the West African subregion of the menace of drug trafficking. Nigeria is also committed to strengthening ties with its development partners and the international community, especially with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, INTERPOL and the United Nations Office for West Africa.

Nigeria believes that the problem of drug trafficking requires national, subregional and regional approaches. Thus, we will continue to work closely with the African Union, ECOWAS and the Intergovernmental Action Group Against Money Laundering in West Africa to tackle this problem. At the bilateral level, Nigeria is strengthening its ties with several countries, including the United Kingdom, South Africa and China, on drug control.

In spite of these efforts, the international community must continue to pay close attention to developments in the West African region before the situation there escalates into an emergency. In the sprit of shared and common responsibility, Nigeria urges the international community to provide necessary assistance to States of the subregion to build their capacities in order to respond more effectively to these challenges.

Combating drug trafficking and related organized crime must be situated in the wider context of poverty eradication and human development, in line with the commitments undertaken in the Millennium Development Goals. Attention should also be paid to conflict prevention in the subregion and to the role played by the African diaspora in the chain. Efforts should not be limited to cocaine and cannabis imported mainly from outside the continent, but should extend to drugs produced locally. An urgent area of focus and capacity support should be the development of mechanisms for gathering and sharing information on organized criminal groups in the subregion.

Let me assure you, Mr. President, of Nigeria's overwhelming support for the presidential statement adopted by the Council today (S/PRST/2009/32). We look forward to working closely with other delegations to implement existing frameworks.

The President (*spoke in French*): I give the floor to the representative of Cape Verde.

Mrs. Lima da Veiga (Cape Verde): At the outset, I wish to congratulate Burkina Faso, President of the Security Council for the month of December, on having selected the issue of drug trafficking as a threat to international security as the topic of today's debate.

This debate has a particular meaning for the West African region, which is becoming a hub for the trafficking of drugs, in particular cocaine. The risks and emerging challenges associated with this problem are huge for that region, which is already struggling with social, economic and political vulnerabilities. Among those risks and challenges are new illicit businesses in the region whose impact extends to other regions of the continent and beyond, increasing drug abuse and related health and security problems, human trafficking, the destruction of human capital and the financing of illegal armed activities and terrorism.

Because of its transboundary nature and the serious threats it poses to regional stability and international security, drug trafficking has attracted the growing attention of the international community. It is on the agendas of the United Nations, the European Union, the African Union and other international organizations. It is also the drive behind the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Political Declaration on the Prevention of Drug Abuse, Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organized Crimes in West Africa and the Regional Response Action Plan to address the growing problem of illicit drug trafficking.

In adopting the Action Plan, we members of ECOWAS have committed ourselves to mobilizing our political leadership and ensuring the necessary

resources to prevent and combat illicit drug trafficking, related organized crime and drug abuse in a strategic and durable way. In several of our States, the Regional Response Action Plan has been translated into national plans, although the rhythm of implementation and results may differ from State to State due to endogenous circumstances and constraints.

Referring to the particular case of Cape Verde, our geographical situation at the crossroads of three continents — Africa, Europe and the Americas — is a source of both opportunity and risk. Building upon the opportunities and reducing the risk factors are therefore at the core of our transformational development policies.

To reduce the risk factors and effectively combat new threats, we have adopted a comprehensive security policy and strategy that clearly represent a break with the past in terms of concept, implementation tools and articulation with national stakeholders and international partners. At the legislative level, new laws to counter narcotics, money-laundering and corruption have been adopted. Cooperation has been developed with strategic partners to enhance institutional capacity, law enforcement, surveillance of our waters, control of illicit maritime activities and intelligence-sharing.

Law enforcement and drug control entities and institutions mandated to prevent and deal with financial crimes linked to money-laundering and the financing of terrorism have been put in place. Controls in ports and airports have been tightened. Furthermore, Cape Verde has ratified the pertinent international conventions and adapted its national legislation to the international legal framework. Drug supply and demand have been reduced. Preventive education, treatment, rehabilitation and reinsertion activities have been implemented in close cooperation with civil society organizations.

Despite the positive results achieved, the struggle is not yet over. Many challenges remain. Strengthening justice administration and continuing to provide law enforcement entities with the necessary legal frameworks is essential to reducing the potential infiltration of Cape Verde's society and economy by corrupt practices. Therefore, Cape Verde is focusing attention on the need to intensify actions to prevent drug abuse and urban violence, in particular among young people; to strengthen treatment options for drug-abusers and their social reintegration; to reduce the possibility of the use of the national territory for the illicit drug trade; and to enhance national, regional and international cooperation.

We have been always aware that our fight cannot be effective and durable while our region continues to be used as a safe haven by drug traffickers and organized criminal groups due to weak legislation and enforcement institutions. Without constant and firm action by our neighbouring countries, we would be unable to make further progress. That knowledge moved us to actively participate in the efforts of ECOWAS to develop a regional legal framework to tackle drug trafficking and harmonize the domestic laws of member States against drug trafficking.

That same reasoning moved us to host in October 2008 in our capital, Praia, the ECOWAS High-level Conference on Drug Trafficking as a Security Threat in West Africa, which led to the adoption of the Political Declaration and the Regional Response Action Plan. Given our track record on cooperation and our modest success at curbing drug trafficking from Latin America, we stand ready to continue to share information and best practices and to engage with other ECOWAS member States. That will be important to improve drug control and to strengthen prevention, treatment and rehabilitation efforts, while curbing the impact of the drug trade on national economies and political stability.

While Cape Verde applauds the international community for its growing concern and attention to the problem, it is of the view that international responses should better reflect the seriousness of the situation. They should be comprehensive, strategic and more coordinated. In this context, Cape Verde salutes the recent roundtable of ECOWAS partners organized in Vienna with the support of the Austrian Government and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. We salute the various commitments made at the roundtable and urge their rapid translation into concrete actions to accelerate the implementation of the Regional Response Action Plan. Indeed, what has been achieved so far is very positive, but much remains to be done.

In line with its responsibility to maintain international peace and security, the Security Council should continue to monitor the situation and take measures to assist other United Nations bodies to deliver a more coordinated response. The extraordinary

work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime should be duly supported.

We also urge the Security Council and the United Nations as a whole to strengthen their actions against drug producing and purchasing markets and transit countries, and to increase awareness about the harmful potential of the drug trade. Efforts to effectively hold accountable all of those involved in this illegal activity should also be scaled up, in compliance with obligations set out in the various legal instruments on combating international crimes. Member States should unequivocally join these efforts. Regional and subregional organizations, civil society and other stakeholders should be encouraged to build resilience to drug trafficking and to prevent the emergence of drug conflicts.

The recent reaffirmation in Vienna of the fundamentals of the ECOWAS Political Declaration and Regional Response Action Plan and, more important, the programmes and plans already in motion are a clear signal of the political will and commitment of the countries of our subregion to assume their share of responsibility in the process.

The President (*spoke in French*): I call on the representative of Luxembourg.

Ms. Lucas (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): I congratulate the Burkina Faso presidency of the Security Council on having organized this public debate on drug trafficking as a threat to international security. Luxembourg fully supports the statement made by the representative of Sweden on behalf of the European Union.

My country agrees with the analysis that organized crime linked to drug trafficking represents a serious threat to international peace and security and a significant impediment to sustainable development. We must urgently react to the serious problems posed by the ever-strengthening links between drug trafficking, corruption and other types of organized crime, such as human trafficking, illicit arms trafficking, cybercrime and money-laundering, including that used to finance terrorism. The international community must step up its efforts to assist countries, subregions and regions affected by the scourge of drug trafficking, and the activities of the United Nations should be at the centre of these joint efforts.

The problem of narcotics trafficking should, in future, be part of a comprehensive approach to conflicts and an integral part of peacekeeping operations, peacebuilding strategies and, in more general terms, our development policy. In this regard, we welcome resolutions 1829 (2008) and 1876 (2009), on Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau, respectively.

In my capacity as President of the Economic and Social Council, I should like to emphasize, in this context, the potential for cooperation among the Council, especially through its Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission in the fight against drug trafficking and its impact on stability, governance and socio-economic development in countries emerging from conflict.

Faced with the growth in drug production and trafficking, the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem, adopted at the fifty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, have reiterated once again the importance of simultaneously reducing supply and demand, as well as the need to strengthen and step up joint efforts at the national, regional and international levels to deal with these global problems in a more comprehensive way pursuant to the principle of common and shared responsibility.

If international action is to have its full effect, we need the support of all the States Members of our Organization. And those efforts begin with the national implementation of existing international instruments. My country has ratified all the international conventions relating to the fight against drugs and transnational crime, and, specifically, the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. In implementing that Convention, Luxembourg is among the few countries to have followed up on article 5 and established a fund to combat narcotics trafficking by reinvesting confiscated drug money in projects aimed at fighting drug trafficking. For example, at the request of the Minister of Justice of Mali, between 2010 and 2012 Luxembourg will co-finance through this fund a project aimed at fighting the rise in organized crime, and in drug trafficking in particular, and its destabilizing effects in Mali and the subregion.

In the context of our cooperation and development policy, my country, in addition to its regular contributions to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, is also carrying out a number of bilateral projects in the area of counter-narcotics trafficking, including projects that integrate aspects of peacebuilding. Luxembourg is sincerely convinced that we must address the dimensions of peace, security, development and human rights in an integrated way, giving the same attention to each.

The President (*spoke in French*): I give the floor to the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. Barbarlić (Bosnia and Herzegovina): At the outset, I should like to thank you, Sir, for having organized the debate on this important topic, with particular attention to its repercussions in Africa. Bosnia and Herzegovina aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Sweden on behalf of the European Union.

The interrelationship between drugs, organized crime, human trafficking and corruption represents a universal challenge that endangers the economies, security and political stability of all countries of the world. These threats, which do not respect borders, require each country and the international community to make additional efforts to enhance multilateral partnerships and cooperation to properly address this modern scourge.

Enhanced knowledge of trends is a prerequisite for effective policymaking and operational responses. In this context, I would like to underline the importance of the ratification and implementation of international legal treaties. Of particular importance is the need to provide national drug control information that will enable United Nations treaty-based and governing bodies to monitor patterns in drug abuse, to make realistic impact assessments and to develop global and regional policies to fight illicit drugs and crime.

On the other hand, technical assistance to Member States — especially to developing countries with fragile political and economic situations — is crucial to strengthening national capacities to create efficient drug control frameworks, to preventing and counteracting illicit drug abuse, and to providing access to drug dependence treatments and creating an environment favourable to reintegration and alternative development.

My delegation would like to join those who have acknowledged the seriousness of this problem and to point out that, given its nature, it is clear that no single country acting alone can address this problem successfully. While building the proper judicial and police systems in individual countries is of paramount importance, cooperation at the subregional and regional level is equally important.

In that sense, we fully support the work of the Economic Community of West African States in promoting and fostering regional cooperation in West Africa aimed at countering drug proliferation. Although we are discussing the situation in Africa, similar problems are occurring in other regions as well.

I should also like to use this opportunity to state that my country has undertaken important legislative, judicial and structural reforms aimed at strengthening our national drug control system and fighting illicit trafficking and related crimes. The Parliamentary Assembly of my country has also adopted a national strategy on the supervision of narcotic drugs and the prevention and suppression of the abuse of narcotic drugs, and a plan of action for its implementation. I should also like to stress that we have established close cooperation with the customs and border-control services of neighbouring countries and initiated the conclusion of bilateral agreements on police and judicial cooperation based on the common understanding that tackling drug trafficking crimes requires a regional approach.

We believe that it is crucial to cooperate, exchange information and experiences, and promote good practices in confronting this issue. In that regard, Bosnia and Herzegovina fully supports the joint efforts undertaken by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and other relevant United Nations organs and agencies in tackling the numerous security risks caused by drug trafficking in many countries and regions, particularly in Africa. Lessons learned in one place can often be of great use and help in another. In that context, the knowledge and expertise of UNODC are of exceptional value, and Member States should benefit from them.

In conclusion, I would once again like to reiterate that this discussion in the Security Council is timely and very important, and we hope that the results of today's deliberations will energize the concrete

activities necessary to combat illegal drug trafficking and related crimes in Africa. Positive results in this struggle on the African continent will in turn contribute to global action to build security and justice in the region.

The President (*spoke in French*): I call on the representative of Ghana.

Mr. Christian (Ghana): Ghana is pleased to see Burkina Faso presiding over the Security Council this month and was particularly honoured to see Mr. Alain Yoda, Minister for Foreign Affairs, presiding earlier over today's open debate. My delegation also wishes to express its appreciation to the delegation of Burkina Faso for having organized this debate, as well as for having prepared the concept paper on the important issue as illicit drug trafficking, which poses a real and present threat to the peace, security and stability of many regions of the world, including Africa. My delegation thanks the Secretary-General for his presence and his statement, and the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for his briefing. We also align ourselves with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

West Africa has become not only a transit point but also a final destination for the illicit drug trade, which usually follows a circuitous route, originating in South America, to Europe and elsewhere, in a vicious cycle of reduction, supply, transport, transit and consumption. In some cases, that illicit trade has triggered or fueled conflicts, corruption and other organized crimes, such as the trafficking of persons, particularly women and children, who are often deceived, abducted or otherwise forcibly recruited as drug couriers against their will.

In keeping with Ghana's commitment to the fight against illicit trafficking in drugs, the Government of Ghana has taken measures at the national level to combat drug trafficking, including strengthening land border controls and sea patrols. The Narcotics Control Board of Ghana is being streamlined to enhance its data collection capability, and the possibility is being explored to enable the Board to exercise the power to prosecute drug-related crimes. The judicial and law enforcement authorities of Ghana have accorded cases involving drug trafficking renewed priority with a view to ensuring the speedy disposal of such cases and to imposing stricter bail conditions for suspects, including safeguards to preserve evidence obtained to facilitate prosecutions, while at the same time ensuring that standards of fair trial and due process are not undermined. Training programmes have been undertaken to enhance the ability of judicial and law enforcement agencies to handle drug cases in a more efficient manner.

Recognizing that our national efforts must be complemented by bilateral, regional and international cooperation, given that the problem of drug trafficking is a global challenge, Ghana has sought and received bilateral technical assistance to improve airport screening procedures for passengers and luggage. Following parliamentary ratification by Ghana of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, our country is considering becoming a party to the principal Convention itself. In March this year, Ghana hosted an international meeting to address the protection and assistance needs of victims of drug trafficking.

At the subregional level, Ghana subscribes to the Political Declaration on the Prevention Of Drug Abuse, Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organized Crimes in West Africa of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and urges the international community to provide the required resources for a more effective implementation of the ECOWAS Regional Response Action Plan aimed at strengthening national capacities and cross-border cooperation to tackle drug trafficking and organized crime.

To that end, Ghana welcomes the West Africa Coast Initiative, which is a United Nations inter-agency initiative involving UNODC, the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the United Nations Office for West Africa and INTERPOL. Effective coordination and coherence among those agencies, and also among the agencies and ECOWAS and the African Union (AU), would be instrumental in achieving the successful implementation of that Initiative. It is no coincidence that the ECOWAS Action Plan highlights not only illicit drug trafficking, but also other organized crimes. Efforts to combat illicit drug trafficking must be part of the overall effort to deter, detect and punish organized crime, as the various forms of organized crimes tend to be mutually reinforcing and interlinked.

National, regional and international efforts to enhance national capacities to combat organized crime might be fruitless if organized crime networks, which normally operate in the shadowy underground world in order to elude detection, succeed in compromising the integrity of law enforcement agencies through corruption, which would provide those networks with the opportunity to conduct and carry out illicit drug and related activities with impunity. In fact, in many cases, what is required is not capacity-building at the legislative, institutional or technical levels, but rather the ability and political will of law enforcement authorities and political leaders to say no to crime and corruption.

That is why Ghana is a party to the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption and the United Nations Convention against Corruption, and has introduced various pieces of legislation to make corruption unattractive to public officials and private individuals alike. The Attorney General of Ghana has recently circulated an analytical publication comparing Ghana's anti-corruption laws to the United Nations and AU treaties on corruption as a tool to create public awareness of Ghana's commitment to combating corruption at the national, regional and international levels. Combating corruption should be central to any strategy to fight drug trafficking and other organized crime.

As is well known, the experience of some countries emerging from conflict has taught us that illicit drug trafficking and other organized crimes tend to thrive in an atmosphere of conflict, the absence of the rule of law and the lack of good governance and democratic accountability, in which the legitimate State institutions, and indeed society as a whole, have been rendered weak and fragile. For that reason, some organized criminals have at times sought to undermine the stability of States and frustrated post-conflict recovery efforts.

During the democracy roundtable held by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance in Mexico City last week, participants heard examples of illicit funds that have been used to influence electoral processes and to corrupt and seize the State apparatus. It also called for broader international cooperation against organized crime, with a focus on the collective defence and protection of democratic institutions and processes so as to strengthen their resilience to the pressure of illicit funding and organized crime.

In its presidential statement of July this year (S/PRST/2009/20), the Security Council recognized the link between illicit drug trafficking and other organized crime and conflict when it expressed concern about cross-border issues in West Africa, such as the illegal drug trade, terrorist activity in the Sahel, maritime insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea, weapons proliferation, in particular of small arms, and the resurgence of undemocratic seizures of power, and called for a comprehensive strategy of conflict resolution and crisis prevention while addressing such issues.

That means that, in addition to the ECOWAS Regional Response Action Plan to combat illicit drugs, the international community must support ECOWAS in implementing its Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, their Ammunition and Other Related Materials, which came into force recently. Such a comprehensive strategy should include support for the ongoing efforts of ECOWAS, in collaboration with the AU, the United Nations and the international community in general, to promote respect for human rights, democracy, the rule of law and constitutional order in West Africa, including support for the application of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.

It is equally important for the Council and the General Assembly to continue or to enhance their political, financial and strategic support for the Peacebuilding Commission to expedite its work, in partnership with ECOWAS and the AU Peace and Security Council, in addressing the root causes of the conflicts in Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone, Burundi and the Central African Republic with a view to consolidating post-conflict recovery in those countries.

I would like to conclude by emphasizing that the previous and present calls for partnership, shared responsibility and international cooperation would suggest that the international community is aware of what is required to confront the challenge of illicit drug trafficking and other organized crime. Such calls also indicate that what might be missing is urgent action to address the problems already identified in the various United Nations and other studies and reports, as well as in resolutions of this Council, including the presidential statement (S/PRST/2009/32) adopted today.

I therefore wish to close by echoing the plea made in July by the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime that illicit drug trafficking must be stopped (see S/PV.6157), and to call for urgent action.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina.

Mr. Argüello (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, our delegation, too, wishes to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your work in the presidency during the month of December and to thank you above all for convening this open debate. We reiterate the importance of the Security Council's holding public meetings that enable all the Members of the Organization to express their views and to interact with Council members. Also allow me to thank through you Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), for his very comprehensive briefing of the Council in this morning's meeting.

The issue of drug abuse and illicit trafficking in narcotics and related crimes is one of the most disturbing problems on the international agenda today. The reports prepared by UNODC, the International Narcotics Control Board and other sources cite countries in every part of the world — consumer countries, countries that produce the various drugs and countries of transit and sale. The Argentine Republic upholds the principle of shared responsibility between producer, consumer and transit countries and stresses the need for a focus balanced between combating drug trafficking and related crimes and taking measures to prevent consumption and ensure help for addicts.

In the fight against drugs and drug trafficking, a comprehensive approach is needed, through coordinating policies for monitoring trafficking, preventing addiction and helping addicts. At the same time, it is essential that States' responses be strengthened through an ongoing dialogue with civil society, and that the fight against drug trafficking and related crimes be conducted with full respect for human rights and with a nuanced focus that seeks the social rehabilitation of addicts.

We are convinced that it is important to have a regional focus that reinforces cooperation at the international level. In our hemisphere, the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission monitors the implementation of binding legal instruments and the Anti-Drug Strategy that was approved in Buenos Aires in 1996. We believe that monitoring and assessment should be conducted through multilateral mechanisms that coordinate international cooperation and are based on objective, reliable information. We particularly wish to highlight the importance of the regional Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism as an objective instrument for measuring member States' progress in controlling the illicit drug problem, as well as for identifying vulnerabilities and areas that need improvement and for strengthening solidarity and cooperation in the hemisphere.

Argentina takes an active part in international initiatives on this subject, and we contribute to the work of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs, of which we are a member. We also support the central role of the International Narcotics Control Board and UNODC, as well as other multilateral initiatives and agreements. Among those I should single out the Political Declaration adopted in March during the high-level segment of the fifty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (see E/2009/28-E/CN.7/2009/12), which proposes several measures to intensify international cooperation, a key factor in this area.

I shall conclude by stressing that the transnational nature of illicit drug trafficking calls for a coordinated response on the part of the international community and of every region. To that end, the action of existing mechanisms with specific competencies must be strengthened in order to fully implement international and regional legal instruments. That will strengthen judicial cooperation and cooperation among security forces and will ensure the resources essential for combating this phenomenon through international cooperation, even in the most vulnerable regions.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Algeria.

Mr. Benmehidi (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): First, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on Burkina Faso's accession to the presidency of the Security Council for December, and to thank you for taking the wise initiative of organizing this open debate on the subject of drug trafficking as a threat to international security, the importance of which is by now beyond doubt.

I would be remiss if I did not pay tribute to the Burkina Faso delegation for the excellent way it has

represented Africa on the Council for the last two years.

At a time when the international community is celebrating the centenary of international drug control, whose foundations were laid by the International Opium Commission, it is disturbing to note that drug trafficking continues to be a serious threat to international and regional peace and security, to States' political and economic stability and to public health.

In a world characterized by an enormous expansion of trade and advanced use of modern means of communication, the production and illicit trafficking of drugs are among the major activities of international organized crime, with transactions involving colossal sums of money. Traffickers have access to ever more sophisticated ways of laundering income from drugs and smuggling, which is why it is essential to grapple with this problem as a whole, keeping in view the interconnections and known links among the various evils — of traffic in drugs, people and organs, of money-laundering and corruption, cybercrime and, especially, the devastating phenomenon of international terrorism, for which drugs constitute the main source of financing, along with ransoms coming from the crime of hostage-taking.

The intersection of all those crimes and the confluence of other factors such as the multifaceted crisis that has rocked the world's economy are imperiling international security and the rule of law, especially in Africa, which has to deal with multiple challenges. In that regard it is alarming to see that West Africa is becoming a crossroads for global drug trafficking, exacerbating political and security instability in a number of countries of the region to the point of causing the overthrow of constitutionally elected Governments, with the potential risk of spreading to the regional level.

Algeria supports the efforts of countries in the subregion of West Africa carried out in the framework of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and we were pleased with the adoption by ECOWAS at Praia in October of a Political Declaration and Regional Action Plan that will enable the establishment of mechanisms and policies capable of dealing with this scourge.

My delegation also believes that it is vitally important to strengthen the international treaty framework by calling on all States to ratify the collection of conventions having to do with combating drugs, organized transnational crime and corruption and all relevant conventions regarding terrorism. Beyond that, we must stick to the objectives set out during the twentieth special session of the General Assembly (see resolution S-20/4), as well as the Declaration and Plan of Action adopted during the fifty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (see E/2009/28 and E/CN.7/2009/12), aimed at achieving an integrated and balanced strategy for fighting the global drug problem. It is clear from those documents that it is vital to work to reduce both the supply of and the demand for drugs and to promote international cooperation through an integrated approach.

With respect to the African continent in particular, the international community must work more closely with States and regional and subregional organizations to strengthen institutional capacities to combat drug trafficking and all other forms of organized crime. It is also essential to become actively involved in economic efforts and the promotion of alternative development policies in that region in order to strengthen and broaden economic opportunities and prospects, and thereby to reduce the possibilities and temptations to resort to criminal activity.

For its part, at its twelfth Summit in February 2009, the African Union adopted a decision on the growing threat of drug trafficking, in particular in West Africa, which has become a source of concern with respect to the security and good governance of the region and the entire continent. In that regard, the African Union called on the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to step up and broaden its cooperation with African regional communities in order to strengthen its action against the scourge on the continent. My delegation wishes here to pay a strong tribute to UNODC, which can play a vital role in assisting States in their efforts to combat drugs and organized crime, in spite of being financed essentially by voluntary contributions. We should also like to welcome the in-depth analysis developed by Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of UNODC, in his briefing to the Council this morning.

In conclusion, the Council, which is responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, must play a greater role in combating drug trafficking and organized crime in conflict and post-conflict environments. My delegation welcomes the

presidential statement (S/PRST/2009/32), which the Council adopted this morning on Burkina Faso's initiative.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Peru.

Mr. Gutiérrez (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your outstanding work as President of the Security Council for this month.

The delegation of Peru associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. My delegation also wishes briefly to touch on certain issues pertinent to today's debate.

The illicit traffic in drugs is a severe problem for many States and is cause for international concern. The world demand for cocaine alone amounts to almost 1,000 tons a year, with an estimated value of some $70 billion. Regardless of the status of the affected States, be they producer, consumer or transit States, it is clear that it is a global problem, the responsibility for which is shared by all, as was recently reaffirmed in the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem (see E/2009/28), adopted recently at the high-level segment of the fifty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

Although the world drug problem is addressed in the appropriate forums of the United Nations system — the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies, including the Commission on Narcotic Drugs — we understand that when the issue is compounded by other problems it generates instability and can threaten the security of certain States and their neighbours. That is so because drug trafficking is associated with violence and organized crime, and in certain countries is linked with terrorist activities. Drug trafficking is also associated with other criminal activities, such as money-laundering, arms trafficking and corruption, causing major material damage and the loss of human life.

This dangerous interrelationship is especially clear in Africa. It is disturbing that, due to demand generated mostly in Europe, some parts of Africa, West Africa in particular, have become transit zones for cocaine trafficking. West Africa has also emerged as a transit point for heroin and the precursors of amphetamine-type stimulants. According to statistics of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the volume of cocaine that is said to reach Europe is some 250 tons a year, with a market value of approximately $11 billion. In that regard, West Africa supplies Europe with some 30 per cent of its total consumption of cocaine. However, over the past two years, as a result of changes in modes of drug consumption in Europe, those levels fell by 14 per cent in 2008.

In spite of the reduced quantities being trafficked, such activity continues to have a negative impact on West Africa, where concern is rising over the indices of corruption and the impunity enjoyed by drug traffickers, who also contaminate weak national economies with their abundant funds. This is particularly serious when we consider that some countries facing such threats, especially in West Africa, are emerging from conflict situations or severe internal political tensions and remain economically, socially and politically fragile.

Poverty and the lack of basic services increase social discontent and remain a challenge to stability in the region. In this context, organized crime, especially illicit drug trafficking and corruption, finds fertile ground for its activities, exacerbating existing problems and creating additional obstacles to State-building, the well-being of their populations and the security of the subregion.

The Peacebuilding Commission is playing an important role in addressing this set of problems, which is among the many fundamental reasons why Peru supported its establishment and anticipates providing it with support in the immediate future. One concrete example of the Peacebuilding Commission's work on this issue was the inclusion in 2007 of Guinea-Bissau on its agenda, with Peru's support at a time when my country was a non-permanent member of the Security Council.

None of the affected countries nor the region as a whole can address the drug problem facing Africa by themselves, since it is not exclusively an African problem. It is a problem that must be tackled by the international community as a whole through bilateral, regional and multilateral strategies. It is high time that the developed countries, and in particular the consumer countries, give cooperation against drug trafficking pride of place on their agendas, especially as the

Political Declaration adopted at the fifty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs highlights the need to intensify and strengthen joint efforts, inter alia, by increasing and coordinating technical and financial assistance.

For Africa, in spite of the resolve of its countries and their strenuous efforts — especially through the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States, with the precious support of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime — even more technical and material assistance is needed to reinforce border controls along their coasts and in their airspace, as are increased training and better equipment for police forces investigating the activities of organized crime and drug trafficking. International cooperation is also needed to create the appropriate legal framework for an active criminal justice system, to establish the necessary law enforcement measures, and to gather reliable data to assess the magnitude of the problems of drug trafficking and abuse affecting the region.

We must therefore understand where the cooperation, especially in the form of financial assistance, is being directed so that we can understand how States are responding to the drug problem at the international level. If necessary, we must redirect that cooperation to the countries in greatest need. In that regard, Peru believes that we need a global report that compiles statistics and relevant information on the resources that international cooperation is devoting to the fight against illicit drug trafficking and that identifies key programmes of enhanced cooperation with the countries most affected by illicit drug production and trafficking. We believe that a first step in that direction is that the draft resolution on international cooperation against the world drug problem, which will soon be submitted to the General Assembly for adoption, recognizes the need for this information and calls on Member States to support the dialogue on this theme, through the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

Supporting African countries suffering the consequences of drug trafficking on their territories is a necessity that the international community cannot ignore, especially when this situation, together with specific national situations, generates political instability that can even affect regional security. Hence, the support we can provide should be part of an integrated development and security strategy that will contribute to building lasting peace in Africa.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Bailly (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): My delegation is pleased to take the floor during this open debate on the item "Peace and security in Africa: drug trafficking as a threat to international security", which is a matter of great interest to us.

At the outset, Mr. President, I join other delegations in conveying to you my warm congratulations on this noble initiative, which has given us an opportunity to pool our thoughts on one of the ills that is undermining the harmonious development of Africa. My appreciation also goes to the United Nations, and in particular the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, for all the assistance provided to my country and especially for the unceasing and tireless efforts to the benefit of developing countries as they combat the scourge of drugs.

Trafficking in drugs, which now more than ever is a part of globalization, is nothing new. We no longer hesitate to talk about it as a transnational organized crime with its own characteristics in terms of scope, organization and financing. The growth of this scourge has a dangerous effect on the equilibrium of our States, and because of their transnational nature, these crimes pose a serious threat to national, subregional and international peace and security.

In the wake of decades of fratricidal wars whose disastrous consequences continue to hamper its development, the West African region has become a major transit area for drug trafficking, in particular cocaine being shipped from Latin America to Europe. This is a major scourge with an impact on the equilibrium of all our societies. Besides the rise in crime that it causes, this trafficking harms our public health systems and spreads HIV/AIDS.

Drug money corrupts our financial systems and poses a threat to the survival of our States. It generates a specific type of crime and creates networks of criminals with their associated terrorism, gang wars and payback — even armed movements. The fact is that drug trafficking finances and is accompanied by other crimes such as arms trafficking, terrorism and money-laundering.

Côte d'Ivoire has not been idle in the fight against drug abuse and drug trafficking. Since the 2002 Yamoussoukro Ministerial Conference on Drug Control in Africa, we have put in place a comprehensive national strategy encompassing prevention, education, health care and treatment, assistance and reintegration, along with a crackdown on trafficking, illicit production and consumption. The strategy, which has the support of the President and the Government of Côte d'Ivoire, includes a number of special measures, such as coordination and supervision of the national fight against drugs by an inter-ministerial anti-drug committee, and mobilization and action by the police directorate on drugs, targeting areas such as smoking rooms and other places where traffickers congregate and systematically destroying inventories and the substances seized. We have ratified and are implementing a number of relevant instruments, including the 2000 United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols. We are working to harmonize our national legislation with regional and international instruments, and we have put in place national and subregional training programmes organized by the Centre régional de formation à la lutte contre la drogue de Grand Bassam in close cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

Côte d'Ivoire is mindful of the need for a comprehensive regional and international approach to put an end to this scourge, and our action in this sphere must be taken within a regional and international framework. Here, my country, which has already undertaken bilateral agreements and partnerships with friendly States on securing our borders and other sensitive sites such as ports and airports, continues to enhance its cooperation with INTERPOL. My country is also working with its focal points to implement the Regional Action Plan against illicit drug trafficking and organized crime in West Africa, adopted by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) at Praia, Cape Verde, in 2008.

In spite of these efforts, our States face many challenges if they are to provide a comprehensive, coordinated and effective national and international response. Among other things, we need to strengthen and harmonize the regional and international legal framework, exchange information, provide education and increase legal assistance in order to make investigations and legal proceedings more effective both in the ECOWAS area and throughout Africa. Technical and financial assistance is a vital necessity for capacity-building. We must also secure our land, air and maritime borders, providing effective systems for control and verification.

In his report on international cooperation against the world drug problem (A/64/120), the Secretary-General gives an overview of the world drug situation and the status of international drug control activities. Among other things, the alarming increase of cocaine trafficking through West Africa and heroin trafficking through East Africa is a matter of urgency. That is why we must all strengthen international cooperation in facing up to this global drug problem.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

Mr. Valero Briceño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): Let me begin by saying how pleased we are to see an African country, Burkina Faso, presiding over the work of the Security Council. My country endorses the statement made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement on the item on today's agenda.

Venezuela appreciates and endorses all the efforts that Burkina Faso can make during its presidency of the Security Council to contribute to the resolution of the armed conflicts Africa faces and to bolster the initiatives of the African Union towards building peace and reconciliation among the countries of the continent. We believe that Burkina Faso will contribute to preventing some members of the Security Council from adopting decisions that are remote from international law and that would prevent dialogue and reconciliation in Africa.

We have been invited to an open Security Council debate on drug trafficking in Africa as a threat to international security. Three fundamental points need to be highlighted. First, under the United Nations Charter drug trafficking is not within the purview of the Security Council. Secondly, this is an issue that, given its scope, must be addressed in an inclusive manner, not through a self-interested and a priori reductionist approach imposed by one, two, three, four or five countries among the international community. Thirdly, the Security Council has demonstrated that it does not wish to or cannot carry out its own functions. For this reason, it should not claim new functions that are outside its competence. An illustration of the

Council's ineptitude in dealing with issues relevant to the international community is its complete disregard for the resolutions adopted with regard to Palestine, which are binding on Israel.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela shares the common interest in and will to fight this scourge in the framework of international cooperation and in fullest respect for the sovereignty of countries and for human rights, in particular the principles of due process, proportionality and the presumption of innocence, among others. Venezuela believes that the world drug problem should continue to be addressed in the framework of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary body, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, in accordance with the current practice and existing commitments on this subject.

In this regard, we would recall that as recently as in March of this year, at the fifty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, Member States adopted the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem. At that session, States affirmed that the world drug problem is a threat to the public security of our States and the well-being of all humankind, since it undermines sustainable development, political stability and democratic institutions.

Major commitments were undertaken in context of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action with regard to reducing the demand for and supply of drugs, in particular in the areas of controlling precursors and amphetamine-type stimulants. There was also an agreement on international cooperation to eradicate illicit crops used to produce narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, and to develop alternative crops, counter money-laundering and provide mutual legal assistance.

In that context, current and future challenges were identified and studied, as were new trends in the world drug problem and possible improvements of the current assessment system. Mention was made of the need to strengthen international cooperation in drug control on the basis of the principle of common and shared responsibilities. We believe that this is how this issue should be dealt with and not, for example, through the use of foreign military bases on the territory of a given country. The challenges in the fight against drug trafficking identified by the specialized bodies of the United Nations must be addressed.

We commend the efforts of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to provide financial and technical support to African countries with the aim of supporting and developing their national capacities to respond to drug trafficking and transnational organized crime. The Government of Venezuela shares the concern of African countries over the negative impact that illicit drug trafficking could have on the stability of their countries.

That is why Venezuela promotes South-South cooperation and major initiatives with African countries to combat drug trafficking. In this regard, at the Second Africa-South America Summit of Heads of State, held in Isla Margarita, Venezuela, on 26 and 27 September 2009, our heads of State reaffirmed their commitment to promoting initiatives, proposals and activities to combat this phenomenon at the bi-regional and bilateral levels.

In addition, during the 19th Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, tasked with countering the illicit traffic in drugs in Latin America and the Caribbean, also held in Isla Margarita from 28 September to 2 October 2009, major agreements were reached on promoting bilateral cooperation in the fight against drugs, in particular in West African countries.

An instructive and encouraging debate is taking place in several multilateral forums on the fight against drug trafficking. In all of those instances, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has provided concrete proof of its solidarity and cooperation with African countries, in particular those of West Africa, by signing many bilateral agreements on combating the world drug problem.

We trust that the consideration of this topic at this meeting of the Security Council will not set a precedent or legitimize any action the Security Council might contemplate on this issue.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Khazaee (Islamic Republic of Iran): The issue of illicit drug production and trafficking is one of the most daunting challenges that the international community faces today. Illicit drugs pose major threats to the socio-economic and security situation of all

societies. The pervasive nature of this phenomenon has made it such an international problem that it can be curbed only through collective and concerted efforts based on the principle of shared responsibility.

In the past couple of years, the bulk of the Council's consideration of drug-related topics concerns the issue of drug trafficking in some regions, including West Asia and West Africa, and a number of resolutions and presidential statements contain references to that issue. Resolution 1817 (2008) specifically focuses on the connection between drug production and security, terrorism and organized crime in our region. In these decisions, the Council recognized the need for the international community to come up with an integrated and balanced approach to address drug-related problems as a shared responsibility.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is presiding over the Commission on Narcotic Drugs as of this month and until December 2010. In this regard, I would like to enumerate briefly the efforts undertaken by my Government in curtailing illegal narcotics.

Over the years, we have dedicated thousands of Iranian police personnel and allocated billions of dollars to this issue. Based on this approach, the Islamic Republic of Iran has mobilized about 30,000 troops of its military and disciplinary forces all along our extensive border areas. Iran has also strived to reinforce and modify the fortifications, facilities and intelligence control systems at transit and border checkpoints in order to prevent the entry of trafficking caravans into the country. All those measures have resulted in the confiscation of massive amounts of various types of narcotics. That has helped to rank Iran first in the world, as we are responsible for 80 per cent of the world's total opium and heroin seizures. I should mention that the aggregate amount of drugs seized by the Islamic Republic of Iran in 2008 amounted to 702 tons.

In the area of regional cooperation, Iran has cooperated with neighbouring and Balkan route countries. Two regional information-exchange centres based in Iran, namely, the Anti-narcotics Police and the Drug Control Headquarters, are fully engaged in information exchanges with drug liaison officers in regional and neighbouring countries. The Islamic Republic of Iran has held eight rounds of the international conference for drug liaison officers.

Iran has also expanded its cooperation with members of the Economic Cooperation Organization and contributed to establishing a unit to combat drugs within that organization. We have also held several workshops on drug supply and demand reduction. Moreover, with a focus on the need for close cooperation and coordination in the region, in conjunction with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the Islamic Republic of Iran regularly convenes meetings and exchanges information with relevant authorities and senior officials from anti-drug forces of countries in our region.

In that regard, Iran held a trilateral meeting in May 2008 as part of the Triangular Initiative. The Secretary-General referred to it in paragraph 38 of his report in document A/64/120, noting that "A first pilot joint operation under this initiative was launched in March 2009 and led to drug seizures and the dismantling of criminal drug networks." Furthermore, the report gives information on the first- ever joint operation against drug trafficking networks, which was carried out in March 2009 and led to seizure of drugs and the arrest of drug traffickers. I should say that, sadly, quite a remarkable number of drug traffickers arrested in my country are from African countries. That indicates that drug trafficking recognizes no borders or regions.

With respect to international cooperation, the Islamic Republic of Iran has signed a number of cooperation documents in the field of combating narcotics with more than 30 countries. We have actively participated in various international meetings and conferences, such as meetings of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and Paris Pact round tables.

We have also facilitated visits by international authorities — including UNODC, Paris Pact and Dublin Group representatives — to Iranian borders. Following all those visits, Iran's activities and efforts in combating illicit drugs have been widely recognized by the international community. Given the fact that this menace serves as a breeding ground for terrorism, Iran's efforts in this regard have undoubtedly made a fundamental contribution to the global fight against terrorism.

Drug trafficking in some regions undermines efforts to achieve stability, prosperity and peace. That is because narcotic drugs are a source of financing for terrorism. They also fuel threats to the stability and

security of regions. We have faced that phenomenon in our own region for many years. We have experienced its devastating effects on the social and overall health of our society. We have shouldered a great burden in dealing with this threat, largely while receiving little assistance from the international community, even though we all know that no country can tackle this scourge single-handedly.

On the eve of the international conference in support of Afghanistan, which will be held next month in London, we hope that that meeting will also consider the international community's commitment as well as, in a spirit of enhanced partnership, the issue of combating drug production and trafficking originating from that country. We also hope that the conference will provide fresh political impetus to mobilize the international community to support Afghanistan's Government and its neighbours.

I would like to conclude by expressing the hope that the Security Council's deliberations on international and regional cooperation on the threat of narcotic drugs will become a basis for a common and shared responsibility to counter the world drug problem and related criminal activities. I also hope it will help to support relevant national, subregional and regional activities and mechanisms.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia.

Mr. Loayza Barea (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me first to express our great pleasure at seeing you, Sir, presiding over the Security Council. We are absolutely certain that under your guidance, Burkina Faso and, consequently, the Council will have a meaningful month of activity.

Bolivia would like to associate itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. We would also like to acknowledge the briefing given by the representative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

The Plurinational State of Bolivia is resolutely committed to combating the world drug problem, drug trafficking and organized crime. In that regard, it is important to point out that the Nineteenth Summit of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies — HONLEA — of Latin American and the Caribbean, which took place in Venezuela from 28 September to 2 October, commended Bolivia for its efforts to combat drug trafficking and eradicate illegal excessive crops of coca leaf.

In addition, the presentation of the UNODC report on the monitoring of coca cultivation in the Plurinational State of Bolivia recorded that the Government of Bolivia deserves to be commended for the significant increase in drug interdiction. There has been a 45 per cent increase in the quantity of cocaine based seized, from 14,912 kilograms to 21,641 kilograms, and a 145 per cent increase in the quantity of cocaine hydrochloride seized. In addition, the number of laboratories that have been dismantled continues to increase.

Operations against drug trafficking have increased by 58 per cent as compared to 2005 — from 6,831 in that year to 10,795 in 2008. The effectiveness of those interventions made it possible to increase seizures of cocaine and related substances by 252 per cent. In 2005, we seized almost 11.4 tons, a figure that rose to 28.8 tons of cocaine and related products in 2008. In 2009, as part of reducing excessive coca-leaf production, we eradicated production on 6,272 hectares — a substantial record in the past five years. That serves to amply confirm the commitment of President Morales in the fight against drugs. Similarly, there was a significant increase in 2008 in the seizure of chemical substances, as well as in the destruction of recycling laboratories and facilities for crystallizing the drug.

The Plurinational State of Bolivia has, for the first time, earmarked $20 million of its own resources to combat drug trafficking. In the framework of our regional and multilateral strategy to combat drug trafficking, the Union of South American Nations has worked towards the creation of a South American council to combat drug trafficking. We have signed bilateral agreements and undertaken joint interdiction efforts with Argentina, Paraguay and Brazil.

I should also note that, according to the World Drug Report 2008 published by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, coca leaf crops in Bolivia account for only 18 per cent of world coca leaf. The maximum potential cocaine production in Bolivia is equivalent to 13 per cent of potential cocaine production worldwide. We should clarify that that figure will decrease even further once the

comprehensive coca leaf study is concluded. That study will calculate the quantity of leaves used for traditional consumption, subtracting it from the maximum potential cocaine production in Bolivia.

With regard to traditional consumption, in March 2009 President Morales Ayma presented a draft amendment to article 49 of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 to decriminalize coca leaf chewing, which had been prohibited in that Convention because of unscientific cultural prejudices. A draft resolution on international cooperation against the world drug problem (A/C.3/64/L.15/Rev.1) was recently adopted by consensus in the Third Committee and will in turn be adopted by the General Assembly. The draft resolution reflects the view that due account should be taken of the traditional licit uses of crops where there is historical evidence of such use. Coca leaf chewing is an age-old ancestral practice of the indigenous peoples of the Andes and the Amazon of South America and it is part of our history and cultural identity.

At the second South America-Africa Summit, held on Margarita Island in September, there was explicit recognition of the adverse affects of all aspects of the world drug problem, including illegal trafficking in drugs and psychotropic substances and connected crimes, on security, peace, governance, economic development and public health for our peoples. This poses a severe challenge to social institutions and policies and contribute to environmental degradation, produce poverty and weaken efforts at social integration.

In that context, Latin America and Africa committed themselves to encouraging bilateral and regional initiatives activities, as indicated by the Permanent Representative of Venezuela, always on the basis of the principles of common and shared responsibility, which entails an integrated and balanced focus, respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, non-intervention in internal affairs and respect for human rights, as established in the Charter of the United Nations.

This joint effort, this national effort and this subregional effort will make it possible to pool the concerted efforts of the entire international community to make ever greater strides towards achieving the results we all hope for in the fight against this scourge, especially in West Africa. We believe that the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and their subsidiary bodies are the appropriate forum for in-depth consideration of the subject.

The President (*spoke in French*): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list.

I would like to thank the Secretary-General and all the ministers and other speakers who participated in today's debate.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.